

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection
November 16, 2004

Sub-Committee Number 3

Issue: *Training and Outreach*

- 1. Are there other ways in which FSIS can efficiently and effectively share information through outreach and training with our constituent groups?**
- 2. The Agency is dedicated to effective and targeted outreach and training. How can we improve our outreach to external groups, establishments, states and constituents? What additional training should we offer or engage in with constituents?**

For the purpose of this discussion we defined the following terms:

- Training is for FSIS employees and state regulators
- Outreach is for regulated industry
- Education is for underserved population, consumers, and the general public including K-12 schools

In response to these questions, we addressed the training and outreach components separate from the education component. Training and outreach need to be presented in a logical sequence. First FSIS employees need to be trained on the new rule/policy. Then, outreach is used as the joint training piece for FSIS and industry. FSIS needs to ensure that its employees, the regulated industry and the states receive the same message.

Committee members made the assumption that FSIS already has training programs in place for its employees and state regulators based on information provided to us by FSIS. The following ideas focus on outreach opportunities to efficiently and effectively share information.

- Uses of agricultural extension agents/land grant universities for outreach. They can provide facilities within a local area and technology support such as web casts and satellite downlinks.
- Explore use of outside resources to deliver training and outreach.
- Establish an outreach team within FSIS to ensure that the information delivered in the agency training is the same as in the industry outreach. This team would ensure that effective outreach occurs within their designated regions. The outreach team would be trained with the FSIS employees to ensure a consistent message. Their responsibilities could include:
 - Arrange and organize workshops
 - Hold joint FSIS and industry meetings at the local level
 - Take the information directly to the small and very small plants
 - Assisting with education component in the region
 - Communicate upcoming regional and national events to industry
 - Participate in workshops with associations and other existing educational venues
 - Develop a partnership relationship with industry

- Tie training and outreach topics to the higher number of calls received by the technical service center. The TSC could identify where the calls are coming from and the trends and use that information to support outreach.
- Establish a self study curriculum for plants to offer basics in hygiene, temp control, cross contamination, and other GMP's.
- Utilize technology such as E-Learning. Options include:
 - Internet is a cost effective way of getting information out to people.
 - Develop list-serve for sending information such as Directives, policies, one page summaries, and links to more information.
 - E-mail PowerPoint slides along with simultaneous conference calls.
 - Establish FSIS Extranet for industry use to provide interactive training modules, streaming audio, video resources, and other electronic learning tools.
 - Use Cooperative agreements to extend/develop e-learning.
 - Develop reference center (virtual center).
- Offer regularly scheduled conference calls or special call when the agency needs to deliver new information.
- Compile a database of how every plant wants to receive information. Do they want e-mail, mailing, blast fax, etc?
- Tailor information to the target audience (by size and type of operation).
- Predict questions that may arise from the industry and prepare a Q&A document.

Many of the above statements could apply to the education of consumers.

- A food safety curriculum could be developed for use in public schools and vocational/community colleges. It could also be offered as a self-study program to industry. The voluntary program could be used as an incentive by industry to its employees. Students could earn a certificate, school teachers could earn Continuing Education Units/Clock hours.